A

TRUE COPY

OF THE

Humble Desires

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

March 22. Presented by them to the

Parliament of Scotland

With their

ANSWER

March 27. 1648.

Together with a humble Representation of the sense of the Commissioners of the General Assembly to the honorable Estates of Parliament upon their Lordships Answer, *March* 29.

As also the last Answer of the Assembly to the Parliaments Paper, *March* 31. 1648.

London, Printed for *Robert Bostock*, and are to sold at his shop at the Kings head in *Pauls* Church-yard. 1648.

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Edinb. 22° *Martii* 1648.

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

THE

Estates of Parliament.

THE HUMBLE

DESIRES

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

WHereas we were desired to appoint a Conference with some of your Lordships which did go on towards an agreement if it was obstructed by a Vote of Parliament of the 16. of this instant; And having already therby your Papers of the 17. and

20. the reasons of our not proceeding in that Conference, and that the cause was not in us, We do now as the servants of Jesus Christ, for our own exoneration, for preventing of mistakes, and for a clear understanding between your Lordships and us, represent these our humble desires which we recommend to your Lordships serious thoughts.

First, That the grounds and causes of undertaking a War may be cleared to be so just, as that all, who are well-affected, may be satisfied in the lawfulness and necessity of the engagement, and that nothing be acted in reference to a War, before the lawfulness of the War and state of the question be agreed upon.

2. That as the breaches of the Covenant, by the prevalent party of *Sectaries* in *England*, are evident, so we desire and hope that according to the Treaties, it may be condescended upon and declared by the Parliament, what are those breaches of Peace which they take to be a ground of War, and that reparation thereof may be sought.

3. That there may be no such quarrel or ground of the War, as may break the Union between the Kingdoms, or may discourage or disoblige the Presbyterian party in *England* who continue firm in adhering to the League and Covenant.

4. That if the Popish, Prelatical or Malignant party shal again rise in Arms, this Nation and their Armies may be so far from joyning or associating with them, that on the contrary, they may oppose them and endeavour to suppress them as enemies to the Cause and Covenant, on the one hand, as well as Sectaries on the other.

5. Seeing your Lordships undertakings should be in the first place for Religion, we desire that his Majesties late concessions and offers concerning Religion, as they have been by the Church, so may be by the Parliament declared unsatisfactory, whereby your Lordships may give further evidence of the reality of your intentions for the good and safety of Religion.

6. That your Lordships may be pleased not to fix or settle upon

any

any such state of a question as doth not contain security and assurance to be had from his Majesty by his solemn oath under his hand and seal; That he shall for himself and his successors consent and agree to Acts of Parliament enjoyning the League and Covenant, and fully establishing Presbyterian Government, Directory of Worship, and Confession of Faith in all his Majesties Dominions; And that his Majesty shall never make any opposition to any of these or endeavor any change thereof; and that this security be had from his Majesty before his restitution to the exercise of his royal power, which desire we propone for no other end, but because we cannot see how Religion, which hath been, and we trust shall be the principal end of all the undertakings of this Nation, can be otherwise secured, but that without this security it shall be left in very great hazard.

7. That for the same end of securing Religion, (which is professed to be the principal cause of ingagement) and for securing all the other ends of the Covenant; such persons only may be intrusted by your Lordships to be of your Committees, or Armies, as have given constant proof of their integrity and faithfulness in this cause, and against whom there is no just cause of exception or jealousie; that so we may the more confidently encourage our flocks, and Congregations to follow the cause of God in their hands, and not to doubt of the fidelity of these who shall be intrusted by your Lordships.

8. That there be no Engagement without a solemn Oath, wherein the Kirk may have the same interest which they had in the solemn League and Covenant, the cause being the same.

All which desires, being duly pondered by your Lordships in an equal ballance, will, we trust, be found just and necessary; And we do not doubt but satisfaction from your Lordships therein may be a happy and effectual means for facilitating the state of the question, and for uniting the Nation in an unanimous undertaking of such duties as are requisite for the reformation and defence of Religion, the honor and happiness of the King, the good, peace and safety of the Kingdoms.

Edinb. 27° March 1648.

An Answer of Parliament to the desires of the Commissioners of the General Assembly represented by them to the Parliament.

I.

THe Estates of Parliament, now convened in this first Session of the second Triennial Parliament, having considered the desires of the Commissioners of the General Assembly represented to them, They, after full debate and consideration concerning the same, for Answer to the first desire, &c. Declares, That the grounds and causes of undertaking of war shall be cleared to be so just, as that all, who are well-effected, may be satisfied in the lawfulness and necessity of the Ingagement: And declares, that they will be very carefull, that nothing be acted in reference to a war, during the conference, and until the same be reported to the Parliament.

II.

Item, For Answer to the second desire; The Estates of Parliament thinks it fit, That the breaches of the Covenant and Treaties be represented, and the seeking of reparation, and the best time and manner thereof considered; and appoint the Committee of 24, or such of their number as they shall appoint, to do the same.

III. *Item*,

III.

Item, For Answer to the third desire, declares, that this Kingdom will be so far from making war against the Kingdom of England, That any engagement they shall enter into, shall be for strengthening the union between the Kingdoms, and for encouraging the Presbyterians, and well-affected in England.

IV.

Item, To the fourth desire; The Estates of Parliament agree to the substance and matter of the fourth desire, and remit to these, who are to be upon the Conference for stating the Question, to explain the same.

V.

Item, To the fift desire, declares, That upon the agreement on the whole matter and state of the question, they will declare his Majesties Concessions concerning Religion not to be satisfactory.

VI.

Item, To the sixth desire, declares, That since Religion hath been, and they trust ever shall be, the principal end of all the undertakings of this Kingdom; so they will be carefull, that the present Question to be stated shall contain security and assurance to be had from His Majesty, by his solemn oath under his hand and seal, that he shall for himself, and for his Successors, give his Royal Consent to pass Acts of Parliament, injoyning the League and Covenant, establishing Presbyterial Government, the Directory of Worship, and Confession of Faith in all His Majesties Dominions; and that His Majesty shal never make opposition to any of these, nor endeavour any change thereof. And as to that Clause, *viz.* That this security be had from His Majesty before his Restitution to the exercise of his Royal Power: The Estates of Parliament remits this to these on the Conference, and who shall be appointed for drawing

ing up the ſtate of the Queſtion, to find out ſome more ſmooth expreſſions in place thereof with the like ſecurity to Religion.

VII.

Item, To the ſeventh deſire; That they will be careful that none ſhall be employed in the command of their Armies, nor in their Committees, but ſuch as are of known integrity and affection to the cauſe, and againſt whom there is no juſt cauſe of exception.

VIII.

Item, To the eighth Article or deſire; The Eſtates of Parliament declare, That to the grounds of their Engagement and undertaking, an oath ſhall be ſubjoyned, wherein both in the framing of it, and otherwiſe, the Church ſhall have their due intereſt. And the Eſtates of Parliament deſire the Commiſſioners of the Church to appoint ſome of their number to meet with ſuch of that Committee of Parliament of 24. as ſhall be appointed by the ſame Committee for the conference and ſtating of the Queſtion, for agreeing upon the grounds of an Engagement, and drawing up ſuch a ſtate of a Queſtion, as may unite this Nation in an unanimous undertaking of ſuch duties as are requiſite for the Reformation and defence of Religion; the ſafety, honor and happineſs of the King, and his Poſterity, and the good of this Kingdom. *Extract. Sic Subſcribitur, Alexander Gibſon Cl. Reg.*

Edinb.

Edinb. 29 Martii, 1648.

An humble Repreſentation of the ſenſe of the Commiſſioners of the General Aſſembly, To the honourable Eſtates of Parliament, upon their Lordſhips Anſwer to the Eight Deſires lately preſented to their Lordſhips.

HAving received yeſterday the Anſwer of the honourable Eſtates of Parliament to our late Deſires preſented to their Lordſhips upon the 22 of this inſtant; we did immediately take to our conſideration the particular Anſwers given thereunto. And now, without any longer delay, do humbly repreſent to their Honors our ſenſe of the particulars.

1. As to the Anſwer of the firſt Deſire, we conceive that notwithſtanding any thing expreſſed in your Lordſhips Anſwer, there may be an acting in reference to a War, before the lawfulneſſe of the War and the ſtate of the Queſtion be agreed upon; which is the very thing we did deſire to be avoided.

2. In the Anſwer to our ſecond Deſire, we neither finde any breaches of Peace between the Kingdoms which may be a ground of War condeſcended upon, nor any poſitive reſolution of the Parliament to ſeek reparation thereof according to the Treaties; yet both theſe were deſired by us.

3. In the Anſwer to the third Deſire, inſtead of that clauſe of the Deſire, *The Presbyterian party in England, who continue firm in adhering to the League and Covenant*, we finde this change of expreſſion in the Anſwer, *The Presbyterians and well-affected in England*; which, as the words ſtand, may intimate and ſuppoſe that there are ſome well-affected in *England* which are not of the Presbyterian party, nor do adhere to the League and Covenant.

4. Our fourth Deſire, for not joyning or aſſociating with the Popiſh, Prelatical, or Malignant party if they ſhall again riſe in Arms, and that it may be endeavoured to ſuppreſſe them as enemies to the Cauſe and Covenant on the one hand, as well as Sectaries on the other, being ſo juſt in it ſelf, ſo conſonant to the

former principles and professions of this Kirk and Kingdom since their first engagement in this Cause, and being also as cleat both in the matter and expression as the Covenant, Treaties and Declarations of both Kingdoms; we cannot conceive wherein it needs explanation, or what doubt or scruple can be made concerning it as it stands, unless there be now some more favourable and friendly intentions towards the Malignant party then formerly, which we pray the Lord to avert. And although it is too manifest that some plead for Malignants, as if they were to be joyned with as friends, rather then avoided as enemies to the Cause (whereof we have spoken more fully in our late Declaration) yet we trust that any such designe is and shall be far from the thoughts and intentions of the honourable Court of Parliament.

5. Touching the fifth, as your Lordships Answer seems to suppose his Majesties late concessions concerning Religion not to be satisfactory; so these concessions being so prejudicial to the Cause and Covenant, we wish your Lordships had been pleased to declare against them, both positively, without any condition; and presently, without any delay.

6. In the Answer to the sixth Desire, as there is much said in the first part for security of Religion to be had from his Majesty; so that clause, *viz. That this security be had from his Majestie before his restitution to the exercise of his Royal power*, not being agreed to by your Lordships, but rather laid aside until some smoother expressions be found out, we are left unsatisfied in that which is the main of that Desire, and cannot be assured of any security expressed in the first part of your Lordships Answer. If your Lordships had been pleased to condescend upon another expression containing as good and as real security for Religion, we should have acquiesced therein, without sticking upon words: but there being no other expression yet condescended upon, and that clause of ours (without which the whole Desire is left uncertain) laid aside for the present, we cannot finde our selves therein satisfied as yet.

7. The Answer to the seventh Desire concerning such as are to be trusted in Armies and Committees, doth omit some of the qualifications expressed in our Desire; *viz. Such as have given*

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conſtant proof of their integrity and faithfulneſſe in this Cauſe, and againſt whom there is no juſt cauſe of jealouſie; that ſo we may the more confidently encourage our flocks to follow the Cauſe of God in their hands, and not to doubt of their fidelity: which qualifications being contained in our Deſires, and omitted in your Lordſhips Anſwer, we are not without fears that this omiſſion may be made uſe of by ſome, as if your Lordſhips had not meant to agree fully to that Deſire, and ſo take occaſion to deal for employing and intruſting ſuch in the Committees and Armies as may be juſtly excluded by the qualifications contained in our ſaid Deſire.

8. In the Anſwer to the laſt Deſire, in ſtead of that clear expreſſion uſed by us, namely, *That the Kirk may have the ſame intereſt in any Oath for a new engagement, which they had in the Solemn League and Covenant*, we finde this doubtful and uncertain expreſſion, *That both in the framing of the Oath, and otherwiſe, the Kirk ſhall have their due intereſt*. Which difference of your Lordſhips expreſſion from ours, may alſo be interpreted by ſome, as if the Kirk had aſſumed more intereſt in the League and Covenant then was due unto them.

Upon theſe and the like conſiderations, we humbly conceive that our Deſires, unto which we ſtill adhere as juſt and neceſſary, are not ſatisfied by your Lordſhips Anſwer. And without clear ſatisfaction in theſe Deſires, we finde it not ſafe to appoint a Conference for agreeing upon the ſtate of a Queſtion for War. Yet if your Lordſhips had deſired or do deſire further conference with ſome of our number for ſatisfaction of our above-mentioned Deſires, we ſhould have yeelded, and yet ſhall willingly yeeld thereunto. And as the preſent want of ſatisfaction in theſe Deſires doth retard and hinder our proceedings towards an agreement upon the ſtate of a Queſtion: ſo we are ſtill confident that a real and clear ſatisfaction to the ſaid Deſires, may be a happie and effectual means for facilitating the ſtate of the Queſtion, and for uniting this Nation in an unanimous undertaking of ſuch duties as are requiſite for the reformation and defence of Religion, the ſafety, honour and happineſſe of the King and his Poſterity, and the good, peace and ſafety of the Kingdoms.

Subſcr. *A. Ker.*

Edinb.

Edinb. penult. Martii, 1648.

The Anſwer to the Parliaments Paper.

THe Commiſſioners of the Aſſembly having this day received a Paper from the honourable Eſtates of Parliament deſiring a Conference upon our late Deſires, and the Parliaments Anſwer given thereunto, and alſo upon the ſtate of the Queſtion and whole matter, Do humbly return this Anſwer:

That as we have been, ſo we are ſtill willing to appoint a Conference upon the Eight Deſires lately preſented to your Lordſhips, and upon the unſatisfactorineſſe of your Lordſhips Anſwer thereunto: and if your Lordſhips ſhall yet be pleaſed to give real and clear ſatisfaction to our ſaid Deſires, we ſhall immediately thereupon appoint ſome of our number to confer with a Committee of Parliament upon the ſtate of the Queſtion, This inſiſting upon ſatisfaction to our Deſires, before we appoint a Conference upon the ſtate of the Queſtion, doth not proceed from any peremptorineſſe about words or things of ſmall moment, nor from any partiality or ſelf-intereſt, nor from any inclination to ſtretch our ſelves beyond our line, nor from intention to obſtruct any lawful endeavours, either for preſerving Monarchical Government in the Kings Majeſtie and his Poſterity, or for oppoſing and ſuppreſſing of Sectaries; our record is in heaven, we abhor and deteſt all ſuch ways: But our real purpoſe is to keep our ſelves ſo free, that in an implicite way we conſent not to, nor concur in ſtating of a Queſtion of War, before we ſee the ſafety and ſecurity of Religion ſufficiently provided for; being tender of the great truſt committed to us, as the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, and officers of his Kingdom, for preſerving the precious jewel of Religion, which ought to be as well to your Lordſhips as to us, above all worldly intereſts.

Subſcr. *A. Ker.*

FINIS.